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THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF SECURITY STUDIES

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When compared to traditional approaches to security studies, critical approaches to security studies are often presented in terms of a deepening and widening of the security studies' agenda (Krause and Williams 1997). In that version of disciplinary history, traditional security studies scholars are represented as people focusing on state-centric approaches with a more solid ontology; with a clear understanding of key concepts such as national interest, national security, and so on, and their implications on international politics, as well as a less flexible epistemology. From that standpoint, critical approaches to security studies are seen as a disruption of that existing agenda. As part of the deepening/widening meta-narrative of critical approaches to security studies, the contributions of these approaches are represented in terms of the inclusion of different scales (human security, cosmopolitan security, urban security, etc.) as well as different issue areas (borders, environment, immigration, maritime security, etc.) into security studies' agenda. Our chapter concentrates on introducing how international political sociology has helped developed the critical agenda in security studies; we move away from a deepening/widening perspective that is common in such review chapters and instead present a review of some of the thematic contributions in an international political sociology to security studies, in the form of a discussion of such concepts as materialities, practices, relationalities, reflexivity and the micro-politics of the everyday (for a broader reflection about security, see Burgess in this volume).

International political sociology seems to enjoy an organic relationship with security studies, considered in the broader sense of the concept to include approaches that focus on discourses, practices and technologies of security. Most notably, those scholars interested in the political sociology of international security seem to focus on the everyday over the exceptional, as well as on the 'everydayness' of the exceptional in their studies of what counts as security today through reflexive lenses that regularly questions the ontological and epistemological assumptions of security's concepts and theories. This preference makes an international political sociology approach particularly engaging within the context of contemporary security studies scholarship. A majority of the all-time most-cited articles published in the journal *International Political Sociology* have a security focus (Dillon 2007; Salter 2007; Huysmans 2008, among others), yet unlike traditional approaches to security, these publications focus on the new materialities, practices, relationalities, reflexivity and the micro-politics of security in an attempt to see the effects of 'security' on the everyday. More specifically, a common theme is on the (in)security practices of security actors in

exceptional spaces such as borders, camps and detention centres, among other spaces. This interest, combined with the juxtaposition of particular foci on movement, mobility and transversality on the one hand, with space, territory and borders on the other hand, through control, security and risk concepts, identifies a common ground to make the case for the existence of an international political sociology of security studies. The ontological significance placed on security seems to inform the broader understandings of the 'political sociology of the international' and the conditions of possibility for studying the international through methodologies and theories regularly associated with the community behind international political sociology.

Scholars that self-identify with the community play a central role in shaping major theoretical and methodological debates and innovations in critical approaches to security (for instance, Walker 1993; Wæver 1995; Bigo 2001; C.A.S.E. Collective 2006; Jabri 2007). Whether it is the push for an increased focus on practices over discourses, an increased attention to new materialities and technologies of security, an attempt to move the focus of security studies to include reflexivity, or everydayness of security practices, an international political sociology approach to security provides a significant insight into understanding the following: How do security practices and technologies have a profound political impact on the everyday? How are these (in) security practices and technologies ontologically significant for the conditions of possibility for the international and the political?

Questioning of meanings, practices and technologies of security in order to understand micro-politics of security appears to be a central concern among the scholars interested in an international political sociology. Authors using approaches connected to an international political sociology differ on methodologies and theoretical formulations in making their arguments. On the one hand, thematic clusters and commonalities surrounding ethical and theoretical concerns seem to identify a collective approach that we interpret to be the basis of a commonality. On the other hand, differences over theoretical and methodological approaches, and empirical focus, fuel debates within the field. While the field seems to be defined by agreements, the existing disagreements prove to be productive in identifying future avenues of research.

Within the field, we identify three main – often overlapping – avenues of investigation: (1) empirical, or thematic, approaches to security studies that focus on discourses, new materialities, practices of everyday (in)security; (2) the theoretical shift to more micro analytics of security drawing from Bourdieusian field theory, Foucauldian genealogical analysis, and more recently Latourian relational sociology as a way to make sense of contemporary human condition of (in)security in a reflexive and sociological fashion; and (3) methodological approaches to security studies that try to bring in some of the methodological debates into reflexive approaches. In addressing these themes, the international political sociology community offers a diverse range of perspectives to critiquing, (re)imagining and understanding security as an ontological pillar of both the international and the political. Our brief contribution to the contributions of an international political sociology to security studies is structured around three sections.

Empirical achievements

Directing their criticism to traditional understandings of security that associate the term with state security and strategy within the context of cooperation and conflict among states, members of the international political sociology community approach “what security means” and “what it does” (Bigo 2008) through a reflexive empiricist perspective that does not have a stable, or fixed, ontology. Accordingly, security discourses, practices and technologies mean various things depending on one's identity-position, agency and needs. Such approach is informed by seeking the intersection between reflexivity, ethical considerations and a nuanced stance on power.

Although scholars concentrating on an international political sociology of security tend to shy away from concrete, stable and clear-cut definitions of what security means, they nevertheless usually share an understanding of security as negative practice for democratic politics. In other words, they tend to be sceptical of power relations that enact, sustain and legitimize security discourses, practices and technologies due to their scepticism towards power relations that sustain security as a concept. Defining security in reference to insecurity, rather than security, requires an understanding of security as a political struggle over the authority, control and power to decide which practices provide security and whose security has the primary importance. Such processes of (in)securitization are embedded in specific practices, technologies and spaces.

The call for papers for the first issue of *International Political Sociology* looked for researches concentrating on “frontiers, boundaries and limits” as well as “surveillance and security technologies” (a call that was followed up by several published articles, see Doty 2007; Löwenheim 2007; Salter 2007; Buckel and Wissel 2010; Jiron 2010; Mau 2010; Margheritis 2011; Karyotis 2012; Kopper 2012; Thomas 2014). The focus on already set boundaries and their consequences in everyday practices participate in an international political sociology’s interest in the quotidian and the mundane over the exceptional through a reflexive perspective. This quest to study contemporary manifestations of security, through the ethical and reflexive lenses, leads scholars to reflect on the political and social consequences of (in)/security practices; practices that operate along the lines of politics of inclusion/exclusion (Bigo 2001; Huysmans 2006; Bigo and Walker 2007b). This kind of politics manifests itself primarily around issues surrounding acts and practices, new materialities, and relationalities of citizenship, identity and borders. More particularly, the literature in international political sociology has paid attention to practices of (b)ordering.

These strictly drawn borders are interpreted to be both spatially and temporally dichotomous. Borders contribute to the perception that ‘inside’ is peaceful and secure, while ‘outside’ is an anarchic space, that is, insecure by default. Temporally, this distinction paves the way towards a liberal democracy and a just system on the ‘inside’, and perpetual conflict on the ‘outside’ (Walker 1993: 6–7). A political sociology of security, for instance, is interested in what constitute (in)security continua, or in the existing connections between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ security practices (Bigo 2001, 2008). Didier Bigo (2001) uses the *Möbius ribbon* analogy to describe the blurring boundaries between the traditional division of inside and outside in relation to the homogenization of police and military forces’ jurisdictions and mandates. This transformation of security practices undermines the state monopoly on the use of violence. On the one hand, the increased demand for security professionals results in an increase supply through the proliferation of private security actors, creating a new source for security that is much less accountable and costlier (Leander 2005; Abrahamsen and Williams 2011; Berndtsson and Stern 2011). On the other hand, the increased globalization and interconnectivity of security practices result in the transnationalization of criminal and terrorist organizations. In parallel, the interconnectedness of transnational criminal organizations such as drug cartels, human trafficking rings or arms dealers have resulted in the militarization of policing.

Another empirical ground that an international political sociology of security has been particularly influenced by a Foucauldian reading of policing and power, as a form of governmentality, represents another empirical ground that influenced international political sociology of security. Mark Salter (2007), discussing the relationship between mobility, security and space, provides a rather good example of this interaction, when he refers to the airport as a *heterotopia* to account for the contemporary security functions of that space. Airport, as a *heterotopia* or a space-in-between, is a space where the confessional complex of citizens, amplified by the exceptional status of the airport as a border/security space, forces citizens to confess to border guards and other security personnel who act as agents of the state, on behalf of the state. Airports,

borders and camps become both hyper-legalized and exceptional spaces, in part due to their relationship with the contemporary (in)security apparatus. Due to their 'high-security' status, such spaces become testing grounds for new information and surveillance technologies, such as digital surveillance through CCTV, biometrics and big-data analysis, among other security technologies and techniques (Muller 2010b; Amoores 2013; Lacy 2014; Salter 2015, 2016). Such studies are an attempt to bridge the gap between computer science, criminology, sociology, statistics and political science in order to provide an analytics of these more 'comprehensive' security apparatus. This has led scholars to reflect on the impact of this over-reliance on technology from the perspective of ethics, privacy and rights. Widespread data collection necessary for big data analysis has ethical dimensions (Amoores 2013; Mutlu 2015a).

The increasing private data collection as part of global human mobility regimes undermines basic human rights, and makes citizens of rich democracies the most 'preferred' or 'secure' travellers (Muller 2010a), while leaving others stranded in front of privatized visa applications centres waiting to prove their trustworthiness. Within this mobility security apparatus, security measures are determined according to "who is travelling, with what documents, in which class, and with what sociocultural political baggage" (Salter 2007: 62). Unless universal standards for mobility rights have not been put together, a world that does not create unequal border security practices will remain a utopia (Mau 2010). In parallel to these questions pertaining to border, territory and sovereignty, many security scholars mobilizing an international political sociology have analyzed the relationship between state (sovereignty) and globalization. In such context, considering borders as being 'impermeable' (re)creates an understanding of territory as the physical foundation of the sovereign state, and ignores how state itself works in 'non-territorial' ways (Shah 2012). A post-Foucauldian understanding of sovereignty treats it as a form of neoliberal governmentality, and the crisis of traditional borders as "a struggle for autonomy and difference" (Chandler 2009: 58). As Kopper (2012: 277) suggests, while for centuries scholars have approached state borders as strictly and clearly drawn like they were colouring book images, today many scholars study borders as constructions that are blurred and unfixed, like the post-impressionist paintings of Cezanne.

Another empirical foray among scholars engaged in an international political sociology of security has been to draw attention to the privatization of security, often in conjunction with the issue of borders. For instance, the issue of the privatization of border security addresses that state bureaucracies share their main 'responsibility' in securing the territory with non-state actors by working within international networks. The professionals of (in)security or unease management transfer security policies from a 'manual' approach to a highly technological set of practices at the border. Screening occurs through "machine-readable passports, x-ray machines, and, increasingly, various kinds of biometric devices for identification and checking" (Lyon 2003: 13). This shifts the scope of threat origins from individuals to risk groups, and creates 'opportunities' to sort out who is entitled to freedom, who needs to be put under surveillance, and who has the potential to pose security threats in the future (Bigo 2008).

In contrast to the optimistic view that privatization is likely to be beneficial for states by providing cheaper and more flexible tools (see Avant 2004), Abrahamsen and Williams (2009: 3) assert that privatization has certain implications for state sovereignty. Privatization is not a simple transfer of services from one actor to another; rather, it gives insights into the expanding forms of political authority beyond the modern state. Beyond privatization, state borders also reify governments' power on citizenship practices (on citizenship and security see Guillaume and Huysmans 2013). A possible analytics of the interface between the government and the individual in everyday life can be offered by biopolitics (Salter 2006). The pathologization of suicidal terrorists in the US military base in Guantanamo Bay (Howell 2007), or the exclusion of asylum

seekers from the domain of law while remaining subjects to law (Diken 2004), are examples of security governance through biopolitics. Even discourse usually identified as positive such as human security runs the risk of feeding biopolitical networks and global governmentalities (Larrinaga and Doucet 2008).

Another way by which an international political sociology of security has moved beyond the state has been in researching urban security and urban mobility (see Jiron 2010). The often-ignored link between the city and security are an important research agenda often overlooked in security studies. As Coward (2009) calls it, the “urbanization of security” poses a reciprocal relationship that refers to the process through which the urban is securitized and the security agenda is urbanized. Cities, in that sense, are becoming significant spaces, tools and targets of (in)security practices. Technological infrastructures, such as complex regimes of surveillance, policing techniques and technologies represent the security governance of urban spaces. As the example of the “urbanization of security” highlights, an international political sociology of security seeks to move beyond a generalized assumption in IR that “international refers to a realm of reality with clear boundaries” (Bigo and Walker 2007b: 728). By seeking to internationalize, deterritorialize and sociologize our understanding of security, an international political sociology also seek to differentiate themselves from “comparative studies of national societies” (Bigo and Walker 2007a: 3) which constitute national sociological analyses that focus on practices within multiple specific (strictly drawn) territories. This objective naturally has had some effect on how an international political sociology would approach security theoretically.

Theoretical shift

Most theoretical developments in an international political sociology of security can be contrasted with mainstream international security studies; while the latter tend to see theory as an hypothetic-deductive form of modelling necessary to make events/data/things relatable or comparable at the state level, the former tends to avoid these larger causal models. An international political sociology of security tends to aspire to understand the sociological relationalities that sustain contemporary international security and the conditions of possibility for change. Moving beyond a strict understanding of ‘levels’ and by offering analytics that interweave together various scales, an international political sociology of security attempts to move beyond the disciplinary imaginary of IR as a discipline in order to make sense of security in an innovative and relevant manner in light of contemporary security development (see earlier). The pluri-disciplinary perspective behind an international political sociology broadens the theoretical imagination in analyzing security. For instance, though not necessarily compatible, the sociological perspectives of Bourdieu and Latour have been mobilized in order to take into account the relational and unstable ontologies of the social and their place in security situations, while Foucault’s genealogical analysis and his understanding of governmentality has enabled our analysis of security to make apparently ‘facile gestures complicated’ by looking at how security results from specific historical developments. What makes their connections work is the more ‘micro’ orientation of the analytics put forth; this is especially striking when compared to securitization theory.

The logic of exceptionalism, often utilized through the lens of securitization theory (Buzan et al. 1998; Balzacq 2005; Stritzel 2007; McDonald 2008), is a case in point. Approaches connected to an international political sociology have theoretically engaged with two aspects of this logic in particular: the question of temporality (or emergency) and the impact of exceptionalism on the liberty/security equilibrium (Bigo and Tsoukala 2008). Securitization theory implies a fast temporality in the securitizing process with its sense of urgency and the desire for efficiency (see Buzan et al. 1998: 24). In this line of argument, existential threats

are emergencies requiring immediate action. As a counterpoint to the Copenhagen School approach, Didier Bigo and his colleagues from the so-called Paris School focus on the bureaucratic, mundane or rather quotidian aspects of security politics. In their formulation, securitization process is not necessarily simply a norm/exception relationship as per Carl Schmitt or Giorgio Agamben's articulations, but rather a result of intra-field competitions and an outcome of the bureaucratic politics of (in)security practices. According to this version of securitization theory, the process of securitization is not simply a result of a discursive act, but rather an outcome of a series of bureaucratic processes and practices. While securitization theory has a rather implicit normative agenda (Wæver 1995), the scholarship in international political sociology has explicitly taken at its core the normative issues with securitizing moves, as they often come at the expense of personal liberties, privileging security over liberty (Aradau 2004; Huysmans 2004; Bigo et al. 2011).

Another central theoretical difference between securitization theory and an international political sociology approach to security is their understanding of the medium by which security is produced. While the former tends to focus on discourses, the later tends to focus on practices. This is especially clear in discussions related to risk management. The logic of risk is central to 'modern' security governance structures. The concept of risk has gained widespread traction in social sciences and humanities following Beck's *Risk Society* (1992), which defined risk logic as a systemic way of dealing with uncertainties caused and introduced by modernization. The transformation of the post-Cold War security landscape in general, and the post-9/11 global war on terror in particular, has led to the introduction of the literature on risk to security studies (Rasmussen 2006; Amoores and de Goede 2008; Salter 2008). In particular, the very use of modern objects such as planes and communication networks as weapons by terrorists highlighted what Beck (1992) called a lack of 'reflexivity' embedded within modernity. Risk, in the sense used here, is often governed through biopolitics and governmentality, as conducts of conduct for government and governance. These techniques are deeply embedded within modern security governance *dispositifs* (Dillon 1996; Dillon and Neal 2008). Foucault defines biopolitics as the regulation of populations through biopower. Biopower is "the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of human species became the object of a political strategy" (Foucault 2007: 1). Similarly, governmentality, according to Foucault is

the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.

(Foucault quoted in Burchell et al. 1991: 102)

The use of governmentality, as well as the concept of *dispositif*, is particularly significant within this literature as they provide a bridge for the discourse vs. practice debate. Both *dispositifs* and governmentality are neither purely discursive nor practice-based. As such, they provide a third alternative to the Copenhagen School versus Paris School approaches.

Methodological developments

A clear development brought by an international political sociology of security has been an emphasis on methodological questions (see Salter and Mutlu 2013; Shepherd 2013; 2014; Aradau and Huysmans 2014; Aradau et al. 2014; Mutlu 2015a). The "how of writing" is not separated from "what is being said" (Huysmans and Nogueira 2012). Methodologies and methods

are not mere techniques but are actions of their own (Aradau and Huysmans 2013), reflecting the emphasis of an international political sociology on the effects of practices. They also are political. The choice of methods and methodologies matters not only in terms of conducting valid analyses, but also in terms of how and which questions are asked.

When the “international” is seen as a specific object of analysis, it requires a distinctive methodology (Bigo and Walker 2007b: 728). This both limits the comprehensiveness of analyses, and reifies boundaries, which define the discipline. An international political sociology attempts to overcome these limitations by making socio-historical analyses of security. Applying often socio-logical methods, this engagement with security aspires to capture a more complex and attuned understanding of contemporary security measures by looking at their effects on the social. In particular, methods and methodologies such as archival research, textual analysis, elite-interviews, ethnography, field analysis and mapping have been employed in conjunction to move away from methodologies that tend to reify the boundary of a disciplinary IR (Vrasti 2008; Vuori 2010; D’Aoust 2014, among others). There is, in that sense, a direct connection between the theories and methods used in research. What makes Bourdieu, Foucault or Latour appealing to an international political sociology of security precisely is their emphasis on the empirical, their methodological rigor and their ability to make their method clear and reproducible. These scholars present a clear account of their research processes. Field analysis, genealogy, archaeology and actor-network theory present reproducible methods. Whereas Bourdieusian-inspired analyses tend to apply field analysis, mapping and elite interviews, Foucauldian-inspired analyses tend to rely on archival and textual research. A more recent addition to influential figures for international political sociology of security is Bruno Latour. His sociological work on relational ontologies and the agency of non-human interlocutors (or as he refers to them, ‘actants’) have started to find their way into publications in the field and have become an increasing influence in non-mainstream IR (Schouten 2013; Mayer and Acuto 2015; Agathangelou 2016, among others).

A further methodological step has been in multiplying the empirical reference points to a “plurality of spaces and actors” (Kessler 2009: 88). In order to capture and understand diverse practices of various security actors, one needs to deconstruct, or “make facile gestures complicated”, and leave behind the taken-for-granted conceptualization of security. Rather than posing a problem of consistency and coherency, methodological pluralism functions as an organizing principle. An international political sociology of security thus concentrates on the study of practices as they reflexively enable us to engage with this plurality of actors while “interacting with research objects and subjects” as it helps elucidate how they are “contributing to the formation of authoritative knowledge” (Huysmans and Nogueira 2012: 1). This methodological focus on practice is also an ethical reflection about our own practices as researchers in security studies and the possibility, or even inescapability of reifying and reproducing security even when engaging in a critical reading (Huysmans 2002). In light with this reflexive perspective, Eckl (2008: 185–186), Johnson (2013), and Vrasti (2008, this volume) all discuss, in different ways, the normative aspect of conducting field research, that is of the researchers’ responsibility to themselves/to the field/to people there. They argue that IR scholars in general, and we would argue security scholars in particular, should take lessons from experiences of anthropology and sociology if they want to ‘leave the veranda’ and pursue empirical research that pays attention to the reproductive danger of being part of the field.

Conclusion

This chapter identified some of the strengths and particularities of an international political sociology of security. In particular, we tried to identify the introduction of new materialities,

practices, relationalities and reflexivity as key contributions of this approach to security studies. Some of the main points we articulated can be summarized along these lines. An international political sociology of security is grounded on a reflexive empiricist perspective that does not possess a stable, or fixed, ontology. International political sociology scholars tend to be sceptical of power relations that enact, sustain and legitimize security discourses, practices and technologies as they are also weary of the possibility of such reproduction in their own work. International political sociology scholars tend to focus on the everyday, over the exceptional, as well as the 'everydayness' of the exceptional. A common empirical theme that appears among many is their focus on the (in)security practices of security actors in exceptional spaces such as borders, camps, cities and detention centres, among other spaces. Furthermore, the ontological significance placed on security informs the broader understandings of the 'political sociology of the international' and the conditions of possibility for studying the international through methodologies and theories regularly associated with the international political sociology community.

While these points raise the strengths and particularities of this approach, there are also some weaknesses that can be identified. By 'weaknesses' we are referring to the under-represented themes and approaches in an international political sociology of security. First, there is its limited geographical focus (Bilgin 2004, 2008). International political sociology scholars tend to focus almost exclusively on Europe and North America; thus very little is written on other parts of the world. Overall, the Global South remains under-represented in an international political sociology of security. This may in part be related to the second point: an international political sociology of security focus on everyday insecurity practices comes at the price of often ignoring war as a practice. War, while far from the only form of insecurity, nevertheless represents a major source of insecurity for a large number of people living in the Global South. This almost exclusive focus on discourses, practices and technologies of illiberal security practices in liberal states undermines the overall purchase of an international political sociology of security. This ties to more general critiques of international political sociology approaches as only being partially successful in "reaching [out] more globally" (Huysmans and Wæver 2009: 327).

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